

Evans: Denktash impeding settlement

NICOSIA (AP) — Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans blamed Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash Saturday for the lack of progress in efforts to reunite war-divided Cyprus. Australia supports the set of ideas presented by U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali as a basis for solving the conflict, Mr. Evans told the official Cyprus News Agency in an interview. Mr. Evans arrived Friday on a two-day visit to inspect a 20-member Australian police contingent attached to the United Nations peace force in Cyprus. He also was meeting with Cyprus officials. "We are very disappointed that negotiations of the last months have not been productive," Mr. Evans said referring to the inconclusive end of U.N.-sponsored talks in New York in November between Mr. Denktash and Cyprus President George Vassiliou. "We are particularly disappointed with Mr. Denktash who seemed unwilling to accept the set of ideas as a basis for serious negotiations," he said. While Mr. Vassiliou has accepted the ideas incorporated in last November's Security Council Resolution 789, both Mr. Denktash and the Turkish government rejected them. Mr. Evans said that he emerged from talks with Turkish officials in Ankara last year convinced that "they were genuinely trying to achieve a solution to the problem."

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Musa due in Israel

CARO (AP) — President Hosni Mubarak has said he was sending Foreign Minister Amr Musa to Israel Sunday to discuss the problem of Palestinian evictees, the state-run Middle East News Agency reported. It said Mr. Mubarak made the disclosure to a group of French and Arab journalists in an interview conducted in Cairo Saturday. The agency gave no further details but a senior government official said earlier Saturday that the visit will last for one day. A Foreign Minister statement issued later said Mr. Musa will pay a short working visit to Israel for talks with Israeli leaders on the Middle East peace process and the evictees issue.

Honecker leaves Santiago hospital

SANTIAGO (AP) — Erich Honecker left a Santiago clinic in a wheelchair late Friday although doctors said the condition of the former East German ruler "is quite more complicated" than originally thought. Doctor Sergio Vaisman, deputy director of Las Condes Clinic, said the decision to allow the 80-year-old unrepentant communist to leave was taken at the request of his family. Mr. Honecker, in the same blue suit and gray hat he wore when he arrived here Thursday from Germany, looked relaxed and smiled broadly as he was wheeled to a waiting automobile surrounded by relatives and security guards.

UNHCR inspects Saudi camps

RIYADH (AP) — Sadako Ogata, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), arrived Saturday to inspect camps housing more than 30,000 Iraqis who fled their country during or after the Gulf war. During her stay, she will visit the sprawling camps at Rafa and Arifiya, close to the Saudi-Iraqi border, and discuss their situation with Saudi officials, U.N. officials said. The refugees are mainly Shiites. Muslims from southern Iraq who sought safety across the border after Iraqi soldiers crushed a Shiite rebellion in the wake of the Gulf war in 1991. The refugees also include a number of Iraqi soldiers who deserted or surrendered to the coalition forces during the war and later refused to return to their country. About 15,000 of the refugees are trying to get clearance to emigrate to other countries.

Rocket attack on Kabul injures one

ISLAMABAD (R) — More than 20 rockets slammed into the Afghan capital Friday injuring at least one person, state-run Kabul Radio said. The rockets were fired from positions of fundamentalist guerrilla leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami party to the south of Kabul, the radio said. The missiles, fired during Friday prayers, caused extensive damage to government buildings and residential areas, it said. Mr. Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami has been firing rockets into Kabul for several days to try to force President Burhanuddin Rabbani to resign.

Mr. Rabbani was elected for a two-year term in December by a national assembly that Mr. Hekmatyar says was rigged.

German found dead in Algeria

ALGIERS (R) — The body of Benedict Scheidel, 22, a German tourist missing in Algeria for six days, was found Saturday in several metres of water in the foothills of mountains where he had been walking. A German embassy source said paramilitary gendarmes who had identified the body were trying to recover it from a difficult place. "It seems he fell several metres down an escarpment and into the water but we don't know yet whether he died from drowning or what," he said.

Budget

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Craxi proclaims his innocence

ROME (R) — Former Prime Minister Bettino Craxi, proclaiming his innocence of all corruption charges, said Saturday he was the victim of the worst political persecution in Italy's post-war history. But he kept up the political suspense as to whether or not he would step down as Socialist leader despite the huge pressure on him to resign from both inside and outside his party. "It is difficult to find precedents in the history of our republic — and even beyond — for the campaign of personal and political aggression against me," Mr. Craxi said. The embattled Socialist leader called a news conference to answer a 123-page case against him by Milan magistrates who want to try him for corruption, but stormed out immediately after reading a long personal defense. When he was asked the one question that has kept his own party and Italy's political establishment guessing for a month — whether or not he would give up the Socialist leadership — Mr. Craxi simply refused to answer. Milan magistrates last week formally asked parliament to lift Mr. Craxi's immunity from prosecution. He has been told he faces possible charges of corruption, receiving stolen goods and breaking the law on political party funding.

Iraq is ready for U.N. planes if they fly in from Jordan

Aziz offers fresh compromise, says Iraq does not reject U.N. resolutions but 'no-fly' zones, accuses Bush of 'personal vendetta'

Iraqi police posts remain in disputed area

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ OFFERED a fresh compromise on U.N. flights Saturday, saying it could guarantee the safety of the planes if they travelled from Jordan — avoiding 'no-fly' zones in the south and north.

But it restated determination to fight the 'no-fly' zones imposed by Washington and its Western Gulf war allies and offered nothing concrete on the withdrawal of Iraqi police posts on the Kuwaiti side of the demilitarised zone.

"Iraq hereby agrees...to ensure the safety of the aircraft if they enter Iraqi airspace from the west using the direct flight route between Amman...and Habaniya airfield (west of Baghdad)," Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz said in a news conference.

Mr. Aziz accused U.S. President George Bush of having a

"personal vendetta" against Iraq and deliberately confusing the allied-imposed 'no-fly' zones with Iraq's compliance with U.N. Security Council resolutions in order to create a confrontation. He said Iraq would continue to resist U.S., British and French "aggression" in the zones, but said that issue must be separated from those involving the U.N. resolutions on weapons inspections, U.N. flights and other issues.

A U.N. spokesman said Iraq, which rejects a newly-drawn border with Kuwait, was supposed to remove the posts by midnight Friday from what the U.N. now considers as Kuwaiti territory.

The violation would be reported to the U.N. Security Council, said the spokesman, Abdul Latif Kababji, speaking to reporters in the 15-kilometre demilitarised zone between the two countries where the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNKOM) is stationed.

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Palestinian evictees say Red Cross aid could prolong exile

MARI AL ZOHOUR, Lebanon (Agencies) — Palestinians expelled by Israel to an icy Lebanese tent camp said Saturday they welcome Red Cross aid but believe assistance may reduce pressure on the Jewish state to take them back.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said it was awaiting Lebanese government approval to take medicine by helicopter to the 413 evictees and a flight was not expected before Monday.

"We welcome the ICRC visit and know that the Red Cross has relentlessly tried to convince Israel to supply us," said Dr. Aziz Dwaik, a spokesman for the evictees.

"We desperately need heating fuel, food and medicine...but we demand the ICRC do more than supply us our basic needs, that it

pressure Israel to implement U.N. Security Council Resolution 799," he said.

The resolution, passed a day after the 415 Palestinians were forced into exile, demands Israel immediately take them back.

Dr. Abdul Aziz Al Rantisi, an evictee leader, said the Red Cross operation gave Israel time to manoeuvre and avoid the central issue of abiding by the U.N. demand that they return.

"There is no need for such visits in light of Resolution 799 which is very clear and only needs to be implemented," he said.

Israel agreed Friday that the ICRC in the second such visit to the camp could evacuate nine Palestinians "make haste" and any sick evictees whose lives were in danger.

Bernard Pfefferle, the chief ICRC delegate in Lebanon, said

Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri posed some questions about the helicopter operation at a meeting late Friday.

Mr. Hariri sought assurances from the Red Cross Saturday that the proposed mercy mission would not defy his government's refusal to take any responsibility for the expelled Palestinians.

A statement distributed by his press office said Mr. Hariri found the latest ICRC proposal which has been approved by Israel "particularly interesting."

But it added, Mr. Hariri has asked Mr. Pfefferle to provide "clarifications about some aspects" of the operation.

It was not clear how soon the mission could be arranged, but Israel radio said it could be delayed until Monday.

(Continued on page 5)

First leftist party legalised

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Democratic Party for Progress in Jordan (DPPJ) became the country's first leftist party to gain legal acceptance Saturday when Minister of Interior Jawdat Shouib issued a licence to the group.

The legalisation of the DPPJ came one month after three other leftist parties were denied legal status by the government. The secretary general of the party, Ali Amer, told reporters that he believed that recent meetings between senior government officials and leaders of the main left-wing parties had borne fruit and that the legalisation of his party was the first step in a series that would mend fences between the government and Jordanian leftists.

"We believe that the left and the Ministry of Interior can come to an understanding in this age of democracy," Mr. Amer told a press conference at his party's headquarters in Abdali.

"Our aim is to create an environment where social justice rules and economic disparities become non-existent," said Mr. Amer. "The reference of the word socialism is not necessary as long as the ideals are embedded in the party's charter."

Left-wing political observers had predicted that as long as a direct reference to socialism remains in the charter of any party the party will face trouble in gaining legal recognition.

Mr. Amer said that the "on-the-surface" things that the Ministry of Interior was objecting to vis-a-vis symbols and names used by the leftist parties could be "adjusted."

In what may be a precedent in the compromise between a leftist party and the government, the DPPJ deleted from its manifesto any reference to changing Jordan's political system into a socialist one. Previously the change of Jordan's political system to a socialist one was among the main objectives of the DPPJ.

(Continued on page 2)

King, Qaboos hold talks in Muscat

MUSCAT (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday held a round of talks with Sultan Qaboos Ben Said of Oman shortly after he arrived in Muscat.

The talks dealt with Jordanian-Omani relations and the latest developments in the Arab region, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Upon his arrival in Muscat, King Hussein was received at the airport by Sultan Qaboos, the sultan's personal representative Prince Tuwaini Ben Shihab, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence and Security Affairs Fahr Ben Taimour, Deputy Prime Minister for Legal Affairs Fahd Ben Mahmoud Al Saeed, Deputy Premier for Financial Affairs Oais Al Zawawi and other senior officials.

King Hussein and Sultan Qaboos met at Al Baraka Palace. The meeting was attended on the Jordanian side

by Royal Court Chief Khaled Al Karaki and Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'ad Ben Zeid.

In Amman, King Hussein was seen off by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah, the Regent, Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament.

Cabinet members and other senior officials.

Government sources quoted by AP said the monarch was paying a three-day "private visit" to Oman.

"The purpose of the trip is non-political," said one of the sources, speaking on condition of anonymity. "But one can't

say that both leaders will not touch on the latest regional developments in their meetings."

That was a clear reference to the allied air strike on Iraq on Wednesday.

The monarch's visit to Oman is the third since the outset of the Gulf crisis.

King Hussein is a close friend of Sultan Qaboos. The two men often exchange telephone calls and letters. The King visited Oman last in January.

Officials quoted by Reuters said the visit was part of continued efforts by Jordan to repair relations with the Gulf states which deteriorated sharply during the Gulf crisis.

Jordan has maintained good relations with Oman and Arab diplomats did not rule out the possibility of Sultan Qaboos mediating to improve Jordan's ties with other Gulf states. Reuters said.

7 shot and wounded in Gaza

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israeli soldiers shot and wounded seven Palestinians while dispersing demonstrators in the occupied Gaza Strip Saturday, Palestinians said.

In Jabalya, soldiers fired rubber bullets and live ammunition at Palestinian youths who were throwing stones at an army outpost, wounding three of the protesters.

Four Palestinians were wounded in clashes with soldiers in Gaza City and at the Shati refugee camp.

Soldiers beat reporter

Israeli soldiers beat and threatened a reporter and detained a cameraman in the occupied territories, Palestinians said.

The army said it was checking the reports.

In Hebron in the occupied West Bank, three soldiers hit Bassam Shweiki with a club in the leg and hip. Mr. Shweiki, a part-time Reuter reporter, was interviewing Palestinians at the produce market in Hebron when the soldiers approached him.

"They snatched my (tape) recorder and broke it. I showed them my press card. They hit me with the club, cursed me and then threatened that if I continue working as a journalist they would come and beat me," Mr. Shweiki said.

In the West Bank town of Jabalya soldiers detained and later released Majdi Jamil Arabid, a Palestinian cameraman working for World Television News (WTN) a WTN producer said.

Mr. Arabid, 26, from Sheik Redwan in Gaza, was covering clashes between soldiers and Palestinians when he was detained. He was held for an hour at the army outpost in Jabalya and released. The army confiscated his videotape of the clashes.

On Friday in Jabalya an Israeli officer detained a cameraman working for Reuters television, Marwan Al Ghoul, broke his camera and threatened to kill him if he returned to Jabalya.

"He took me to the army camp and took my camera and film. After two hours he drove me out of Jabalya, told me he would kill me if I ever return and threw me out of the jeep," he said, adding the officer broke his camera and took his videotape.

On Tuesday an American photographer of the Paris-based Sigma photo agency, Paul Kern, said a soldier held a loaded gun to his head and threatened to kill him if he did not hand over film he took of Palestinian children in the occupied Gaza Strip.

Relief convoy to Muslims in Bosnian town turned back

PALE, Bosnia (Agencies) — A U.N. relief convoy heading for a Serb-besieged Muslim enclave in eastern Bosnia was forced to turn back after having got within shouting distance of its destination, U.N. officials said.

A spokesman for the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Zagreb, Peter Kessler, denied reports that the convoy had reached Zepa.

"On the contrary, no agreement had been reached with Serbs to let the convoy through, then by several controls. At Rogatica, between Sarajevo and Zepa, Serb rebels shook sardine cans, checking for the rattle of bullets.

One of them called the exhaustive search of vehicles and U.N. personnel a "courtesy check."

An umbrella group of Islamic nations urged the United Nations Friday to stand behind its resolutions and defend Muslims in Bosnia.

Turkish Ambassador Mustafa Aksin, speaking on behalf of the Organisation of Islamic Conference, said that U.N. peacekeepers and observers have failed to

(Continued on page 5)

Fateh leaders meet on reform

TUNIS (AP) — Top leaders of Yasser Arafat's mainstream Fateh group have opened meetings in Tunis on questions of reform, inter-Palestinian relations and the Middle East peace process.

Palestinian sources said during their three-day meetings, which began Friday, the leaders are expected to discuss how to ensure the continuation of the authority of the movement considered to be the backbone of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

The meeting has been in the works since Mr. Arafat's plane crash in April 1992, which left him injured and stranded without communications in the Libyan desert overnight.

That raised concern in some quarters of the PLO that there was a need for political reform with Fateh, which is increasingly being challenged, especially by

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Middle East News

Sheikh Isa opens consultative council

BAHRAIN (Agencies) — The emir of Bahrain Saturday inaugurated the 30-member Majlis Al Shoura, (consultative council), underscoring the advent as a step towards democratisation.

"Majlis Al Shoura constitutes an appropriate and fitting formula for this phase that requires national unity and collaboration," Sheikh Isa Ben Salman Al Khalifa told the fully-appointed council in a speech.

The phase also requires wisdom and thoughtful action, and consolidation of stability on Arab and international levels," he said.

He indicated that the council would be broadened with time, stressing his resolve to expand the scope of democratic consultation in laying down legislations, governing state policy, and streamlining government efforts in economic development and services.

The council, he said, was to generate "luminous ideas and offer proposals and programmes aimed at safeguarding national institutions and accomplishments."

Council President Ibrahim Hamidan paid tribute to the emir for setting up the body, pledging support for the government in a "way that accords priority to the national interests."

Mr. Hamidan conceded that

the beginning may seem slow, but emphasised it as a "solid and prudent start based on sound planning."

About half of the handpicked members were drawn from the preponderant Shiite Muslim sect. Mr. Hamidan himself is Shiite. Sheikh Isa and the rest of the ruling Al Khalifa family are Sunni Muslims.

There is no census based on religious denomination in Bahrain, but the Shiites are believed to make about 60 per cent of the population of nearly half a million.

The council is made up mainly of wealthy merchants, leading business and members of prominent families.

The council is viewed here as a democratic body, patterned after the Arabian style of the early era of Islam.

Sheikh Isa named the 30 members on Dec. 27 to advise him on the country's political and economic affairs and to widen popular representation. A national assembly elected in 1973 was dissolved two years later.

The decree establishing the council said it would be asked to give opinions on draft laws submitted by the cabinet before they are sent to the emir for final approval.



Sheikh Isa Ben Salman

The council would ordinarily meet in two annual sessions — from Oct. 1 to Dec. 31 and March 1 to May 31.

Extraordinary sessions could be called if necessary.

Conservative leaders of the oil-rich Gulf region have preferred the consultation system, dismissing Western-style parliaments as alien to the nature and mechanics of Islamic politics.

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia has promised his people a 60-member royally appointed council but has so far only named the speaker.

Kuwait is the only member state of the Gulf Cooperation Council with a parliament, freely elected along Western lines.

In addition to Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, the council comprises Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates.

Gulf newspapers urge overthrow of Saddam

DUBAI (R) — Gulf newspapers have called on the Iraqi people to overthrow President Saddam Hussein, saying he was to blame for Wednesday's allied air strike against Iraq.

"We call upon the brotherly Iraqi people to overthrow the tyrant and free their will from his regime's oppression ... and then they will find all the support they need to help rebuild their country," the Saudi newspaper Al Jarra said.

The Saudi Al Bayan said President Saddam paid "the price of aggression" when U.S. and British warplanes struck at missile defences in southern Iraq Wednesday.

Iraqi salvage crews retrieved Iraqi weapons and material from a disputed area with Kuwait for four days running this week without the U.N. permission.

He (Saddam) does not seem to care what price his people have to pay for his violation of international law and aggression against Kuwait," Al Bayan said.

It said: "The problems facing the Iraqi people are the result of mistakes committed by Saddam who has become a nightmare for the Iraqi people and an element of disruption in the area."

No official comment has come from the Gulf Arab states on the allied attack which angered much

of the Arab World. But Gulf media have been mostly supportive of the action.

The Abu Dhabi Al Ittihad newspaper said, "it is now clear that Iraq's suffering will only end with the fall of Saddam."

"No Arab wants Arab blood to be shed on Arab soil, but what can we do when Baghdad rulers deliberately commit follies and give empty statements that provoke the world against them," it said.

The Dubai-based Al Bayan asked: "What does the Iraqi regime want? Is what it wants any different from the desires of the enemies of the Iraqi people and the Arab Nation who want Iraq to stay paralysed and unable to do its national role?"

Sri Lankans stage protest

Sri Lankan police Friday broke up a demonstration by Muslims protesting against U.S.-led strikes on Iraqi missile positions, witnesses said.

Police outside the U.S. embassy in Colombo grappled with about 50 protesters waving placards demanding an end to American military action in Iraq.

Then armed riot police showed up formed a line before the protesters, who dispersed after about 20 minutes, a Reuter photographer said.

White House releases Iran-Contra documents

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House Friday released excerpts from President George Bush's diaries and other records on the Iran-contra affair. They indicate Mr. Bush in 1986 dismissed early news reports alleging his involvement as "crazy information."

The White House also released the transcript of Mr. Bush's five-hour videotaped deposition to Iran-contra investigators on Jan. 11, 1988, made in his vice-presidential office.

A written transcript of Mr. Bush's tape-recorded diary for Nov. 9, 1986, the week after the scandal came to light, read: "Sunday the papers are all full of Iran. A lot of crazy information... some of it that the arms dealers that were arrested felt I was involved."

"A lot of misinformation," Mr. Bush, then vice-president, wrote, expressing concern also that a frustrated Secretary of State George Shultz might resign. "His people are not dealing from a full deck there in the State Department," Mr. Bush wrote.

The following day he wrote that President Ronald Reagan "is very suspicious of the State Department bureaucracy."

A separate Nov. 9, 1986, Entry said: "all in all, a troubling weekend. People running for cover, blaming... the right wing, who is normally on Shultz's case, rallying behind him because of the trading arms for hostages policy. At least the policy they see as trading arms for hostages."

The transcript of Mr. Bush's tape comments were not turned over to Iran-contra prosecutors because of their "overly broad document requests," former Attorney General Griffin Bell said in a 14-page report. The White House announced the hiring of Mr. Bell the week after Mr. Bush's Christmas Eve pardons of Caspar Weinberger and five other Iran-contra figures.

Iran-contra prosecutor Lawrence Walsh disclosed hours after the pardons that the White House had not disclosed the existence of Mr. Bush's notes until Dec. 11, 1992. Mr. Walsh said Mr. Bush's notes had been improperly withheld.

"It became necessary for outside counsel to investigate Judge Walsh's allegations," Mr. Bell said in the report released by the White House.

The transcript of Mr. Bush's videotaped testimony showed the then-vice-president to be vague about events at the White House surrounding the Iran arms sales.

Earlier Friday, White House Press Secretary Martin Fitzwater said the material "clearly establishes the vice-president had no particular involvement in the Iran-contra situation."

Mr. Bush has maintained that as vice-president, he did not know the 1985-1986 U.S. arms sales were part of a swap of weapons for the release of American hostages held in Lebanon.

Mr. Bush, under oath, answered questions in 1988 in his vice-presidential office from lawyers for independent counsel Walsh and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) officials.

"That is the complete legal testimony that was given to the grand jury about the president's recollections of the Iran-contra affair, his role as vice-president," Mr. Fitzwater said.

"It's very good and interesting, particularly to stories of government, the vice-presidency, and how decision-making works in the White House," Mr. Fitzwater said.

The notes requested by Mr. Walsh, the spokesman said, "constituted just his personal reflections on all aspects of government, his job and so forth, most of which had no relationship to Iran-contra. They were just notes on policy issues that came before him."

U.S. troops kill 6 Somalis in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU (AP) — U.S. troops shot and killed six Somalis — at least three of them civilians — after the Americans came under fire, a U.S. military spokesman said Saturday.

A day after the gunbattle, U.S. army soldiers Saturday uncovered what the spokesman called the "mother lode of arms caches" — 30 bunkers west of Mogadishu stuffed with more than 1,000 tonnes of arms and ammunition.

Marine Colonel Fred Peck said the ordinance in the bunkers would fill 150 to 200 five-tonne trucks and included surface-to-air missiles, 230-kilogramme bombs, small arms, machine guns and ammunition.

Col. Peck told reporters at least three of six Somalis killed in the battle Friday were innocent civilians caught in the cross-fire.

"The secretary-general welcomes this positive result that should contribute to establishing peace and security, national reconciliation, restoring the Somali state and rebuilding and developing Somalia," a U.N. statement said.

The statement was issued in Paris where Dr. Ghalib was attending the signing of a treaty banning chemical weapons.

Dr. Ghalib said he congratulated Ethiopian President Meles Zenawi for working with U.N. representatives to help bring about the agreement.

Famine, disease and fighting killed an estimated 350,000 Somalis in the past year, following the ouster of dictator Mohamed Siad Barre. Another two million Somalis are considered at risk.

Col. Peck said Somali civilians led U.S. army police Saturday to the 30 bunkers of arms and ammunition south of the town of Afgooye, west of Mogadishu.

"I don't want to start using cliches but you would have to say this is the mother lode of arms caches," said Col. Peck.

He said soldiers expecting to find five or six bunkers instead uncovered 30 stuffed with all kinds of ordnance. He said the army was beginning the massive task of counting the weapons and ammunition.

"It seems to be an old Somali military cache, but some can could have been drawing arms and small arms ammunition from it," Col. Peck said.

The military spokesman said two of the five Marines injured in a traffic accident Friday were evacuated to Germany for treatment. Two were in a military hospital in Mogadishu and one was treated and released. He said a navy corpsman injured in the same accident was flown to Mombasa, Kenya.

First leftist party legalised

(Continued from page 1)

the Liberation of Palestine (DPLP).

While initially an ardent supporter of DPLP leader Naeef Hawatneh, Mr. Amer's sympathy swayed to the breakaway leadership of Yasser Arafat, who set up a renegade DPLP faction in Tunisia.

Mr. Amer said that follow-up meetings between a special government committee and the leftist leaders helped make Saturday's recognition possible.

Asked if his party was requested to make any changes in its charter, Mr. Ali said: "We were told that our party's symbol resembles that of some other parties' and thus we altered it without officially being asked to do so; it was a small gesture on our part. The change was symbolic and we felt that it would not attack the essence of our policies and beliefs."

Mr. Amer as well as several members of his party are former members of the Palestine National Council as well as members of the Damascus-based Democratic Front for the Arab World."

The DPP supports the ongoing Arab-Israeli peace talks in principle and is considering joining the Jordanian Arab Nationalist Democratic Association (JANDA), the largest alliance of left-wing and pan-Arab parties in the Kingdom.

In reference to the past links between party cadre and the Palestinian parties in Tunis and Damascus, Mr. Amer said: "We are and will remain organisationally and financially distinct and independent from any party anywhere. We have and will continue to have contacts with a variety of political parties inside Jordan and all over the Arab World."

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Air raid worries Iraqis, but life continues as normal

By Victoria Graham

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — The allied air attack on southern Iraq has raised worries about another war, but not enough to disrupt the Friday "animal market" in downtown Baghdad.

Shoppers crowded around stalls to inspect cackling chickens, ducks and roosters for Friday's holiday dinner, while some examined the aggressive, brightly coloured fighting cocks on sale nearby.

Surprisingly, there has been no panic buying of food and fuel by Iraqis fearing that an escalation of the confrontation would prune their already meager food rations, and leave them without heating in the winter cold.

The state-run radio Friday announced that the Ministry of Oil had no plans to introduce oil rationing, and it urged people not to hoard gasoline and other fuels.

The day after Wednesday's air raid, long queues of 100 or more cars lined up for fuel at the gas stations, and shopkeepers said people were

buying non-perishable foods like pasta and rice in greater quantities at the enormously over-priced black market.

But by Friday, things were normal, as both shoppers and shopkeepers went about their daily business, and demand for gasoline dwindled.

Wednesday's raid involved targets in southern Iraq. News of President George Bush's lastest deadline for allowing U.N. flights — midnight Friday — was slow to spread and was unlikely to heighten fears of Baghdad raiding.

Worries about another war are restrained among the capital's four million people, who are still picking up the pieces of the 1991 Gulf war and the ensuing United Nations trade sanctions.

Ali, a teacher who would not give his last name, said: "We are sick and tired of this situation. The embargo has been hurting us for two and a half years. Why doesn't George Bush leave us alone. This doesn't hurt the government. It hurts the people, and Bush should know that."

It is Mr. Bush whom Iraqi

newspapers Friday depicted as a bloodthirsty war monger out to destroy Iraq.

The daily Al Iraq newspaper bade good riddance to Mr. Bush in the last days of his outgoing administration, and condemned him to "cesspool of history."

Mr. Bush, said the Arabic-language newspaper, was a "criminal and obsessive lover of crime and widespread destruction."

All evil leaders, said the paper, shed blood in their dying hours.

Saudoun Hamadi, a former prime minister, said in an interview published in the Al Thawra daily that leaders of the United States, Britain and France, had sold their souls to the devil.

Dr. Hamadi said Wednesday's air strike against Iraqi missiles in the "no-fly" zone in southern Iraq was not over a dispute over U.N. resolutions, but because the allies were so overpowered by feelings of hatred that they spent every minute thinking of ways to "renew their aggression against Iraq."

Sheikh Tu'ma lashed out at Mr. Bush, saying he would "blacken his name with his criminal actions against the Iraqi people..."

"We must resist," he said. "This is a holy war."

In Somalia, a few thieves are even in jail

MOGADISHU (AP) — In a city ruled by the gun and overrun by cutthroats, pickpockets and thieves, Yasin Ahmad is a small-time crook who figures he was just unlucky.

The 21-year-old two-time loser is one of just a dozen inmates at Mogadishu's central prison, a faded relic of white crumbling walls and turrets built by Italian colonizers on a sandy bluff overlooking the sea.

"It's very strange. We are in prison in a city where there is no law and order. Everyday there are crimes, there are thefts. But the 12 of us are the only ones unlucky enough to get caught," said Ahmad, who is doing his second term for theft.

Hours earlier, almost in the shadow of the prison, members of one clan tied the hands of a rival behind his back and shot him once in the head. There were no arrests, no investigation.



Two Marines stand in front of barbed wire near Mogadishu's "green line" (AFP photo)

firing squad. He declined to say how many.

He insists all prisoners had a defence attorney and a trial before one of 14 district judges in Mogadishu.

"You don't want to listen to the prisoners," said Gen.

All we ever eat is rice and we only get that once a day," complained Ali Abdulla, 36, who is near the end of a six-month sentence for theft.

"When I was out, I made a lot of money stealing wood. I ate very well, now all I eat is rice."

Rice, it is always the same.

Citizens asked to help ensure road safety

Consumer group urges improved roads, cheaper spare parts

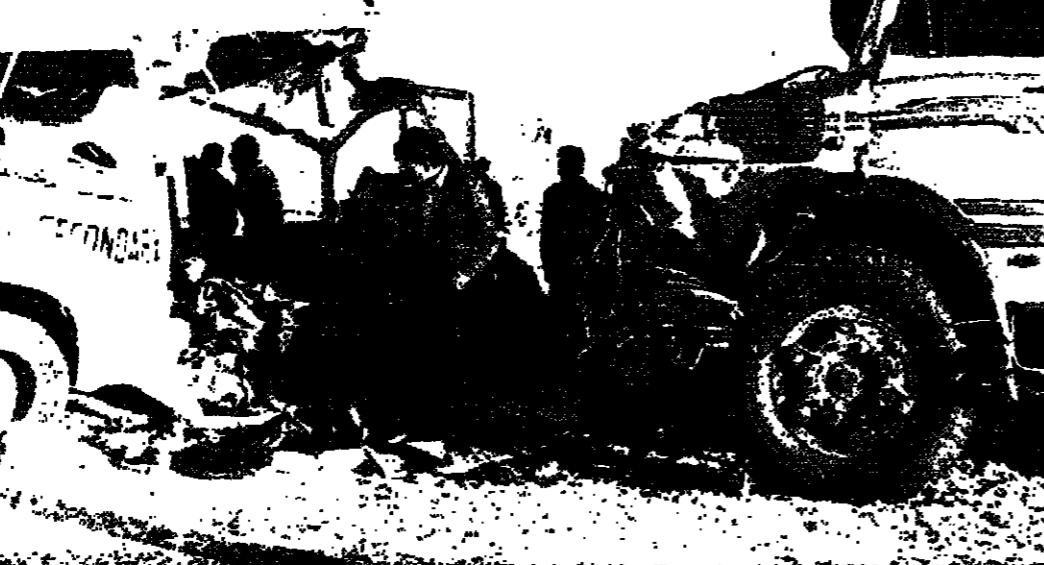
AMMAN (J.T.) — Director of the Traffic Department Brigadier Ahmad Dimour Saturday called for the involvement of citizens and educational institutions in efforts aimed at reducing road accidents in Jordan. That same day an accident involving two trucks on Amman's ring road took the lives of two people.

Addressing the opening session of a week-long training seminar for students at the University of Jordan, Brig. Dimour said his department was attempting to spread public awareness in traffic matters through the help of police departments, educational institutions and students around the country.

The opening of the seminar followed the announcement here Friday of the death of 34 citizens and the injury of 700 others in 1,810 road accidents in the Kingdom in December, 1992, alone.

The Public Security Department (PSD), which released these figures, said that nearly 31 per cent of the casualties were young people aged between 10 and 30.

According to Brig. Dimour, the traffic police and students will discuss the causes of road accidents; spreading information about roads and road conditions.



Thirty-one per cent of road accident casualties are young Jordanians between the ages of 10-30 (Petra photo)

traffic regulations and other related topics, in addition to workshops on organising traffic.

According to traffic department officials, road conditions constitute one of the major causes of accidents in Jordan. They said although most accidents are attributed to human error, pits and holes in the roads, which are more prevalent in winter, cause many of the accidents and cost the country considerable sums of money in spare parts.

Minister of Supply Mohammad

Saqqaq announced late last year that as of the beginning of 1993, the price of spare parts will drop as a result of reducing the margin of profit allowed to the merchants from 30 to 25 per cent.

A study conducted by the Jordanian Consumers Protection Society said that road conditions were responsible for the drain on a motorist's monthly salary by 16 per cent. Each car owner pays at least an average JD 40 a month on car repairs for damages caused by road conditions.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Public holiday observed Wednesday

AMMAN (Petra) — All government institutions and departments will be closed Wednesday Jan. 20 in observance of Al Isra wal Mi'raj anniversary, according to an official communiqué issued by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Saturday.

House panels to hold meetings

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament's Agriculture Committee will meet Sunday under the chairmanship of Mohammad Al Alawneh to discuss the outcome of its recent meeting with farmers from the Jordan Valley. The Education Committee at the House is scheduled to meet Monday morning under the chairmanship of Deputy Abdul Hafeez Alawi. The committee will resume its discussion of the 1988 Temporary Education Law.

Jordan, Morocco to stimulate trade, tourism

AMMAN (Petra) — Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary General Marwan Awad discussed Saturday with the Moroccan ambassador to Jordan economic and trade relations between Jordan and Morocco. At a meeting held at the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the two also discussed issues listed on the agenda of the joint Jordanian-Moroccan follow-up committee due to meet in Amman Tuesday and entrusted with overcoming obstacles impeding trade exchanges. The Moroccan side to the talks is due in Amman Monday. The joint committee's talks will focus on means of implementing a trade and tourism agreement signed between Jordan and Morocco last year. Mr. Awad was quoted by Petra last week as saying that the committee will look into means of stimulating trade and tourism exchanges in implementations of last year's agreement, which was reached in Casablanca during a Jordanian delegation's visit to Morocco. Among the subjects agreed on the Moroccan side was the exchange of visits by businessmen from the two countries, the creation of the joint committee and the removal of customs barriers to facilitate trade exchanges. Jordan and Morocco organised trade fairs in Amman and Casablanca last year, and 80 Jordanian firms sold at least JD 1.2 million worth of national products through the Jordanian fair. Jordan displayed engineering, chemical, construction, agricultural and industrial products along with home appliances, carpets and leather commodities.

Charity seminar calls for public participation

NORTH SHUNEH (Petra) — Zarqa Governor Tal'at Nawaiseh Saturday called on citizens to support the work of voluntary and charity societies in serving the local community and assisting others. At the opening ceremony of a seminar entitled "Interaction with the Local Environment and Participation in Social Activities" held at Al Salt Charity Society premises in Zarqa, Mr. Nawaiseh said true belonging "was the lost link we were looking for to serve the public interest." The aim of the seminar was to evaluate and assess the outcome of public participation in charitable societies.

University holds technology workshops

SALT (Petra) — Two specialised workshops on computerised designs and manufacturing and programmed logical controllers opened Saturday at the University of Jordan's Faculty of Engineering in cooperation with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The workshops will last for two weeks.

French shoot film in Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — A crew from the Third French Channel arrived in Amman Friday on a several-day visit to Jordan during which it will shoot a film on Jordanian industry and trade. The crew will conduct interviews with officials from the private and public sectors and will visit several touristic sites in the Kingdom. The film will be shown at a specialised contracting and industrial participation fair to be held in France in March. Jordan is participating for the first time in the three-day fair.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITION

* Exhibition entitled "Latin American Countries in France" at the French Cultural Centre.

Meeting to focus on land use in development

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment said Saturday that it is arranging a seminar to discuss the use of lands in relation to regional development.

Minister of Municipal Affairs Abdul Razzak Tabeishat said that the seminar planned for the end of January, will focus on land use around Ma'ta University near the southern city of Karak. He said the ministry's Regional Planning Department has prepared a specific plan on land use, which will be taken up by the participants. Furthermore, he said, the ministry has prepared a set of working papers dealing with Jordan's experiments in regional planning in general and regional planning in the Karak and Tafileh regions in particular.

A second paper will deal with the use of lands in Ma'ta University area and a third will feature various Jordanian laws governing the use of land, the minister said.

Dr. Tabeishat said the University of Jordan will present a paper on the encroachment of buildings on agricultural land; and the Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre will contribute a paper on technology use in the preparation of land maps.

The Ministry of Agriculture will submit a paper dealing with the classification of soil; and in a separate paper, the Natural Resources Authority will outline its geological studies on land, the minister added.

He said representatives of the Ministries of Energy and Mineral Resources, Agriculture, Planning, Tourism, Public Works and Housing, Water and Irrigation as well as the Jordan Engineers Association, and Jordanian universities will take part in the meeting.

Dr. Tabeishat said the seminar will be part of a series of meetings to be held at later dates. Other meetings, he said will discuss joint municipal councils services legislation concerning local councils, improving the performance of municipal staff and vocational training centres run by the municipalities.

New centre to improve flow of information, promote research

By Masa Atul
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Decision-makers, researchers and concerned institutions in Jordan will soon have better access to research information as the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST) is preparing what officials describe as a more efficient, upgraded information system base.

A national information system has been operating in Jordan since 1987 but it turned out to be inefficient due to its two-block structure with two independent centres, said Dr. Yousef Nusseir, director of the Computer Training and Industrial Studies Centre of the Royal Scientific Society (RSS).

The separation of information centres at the Ministry of Planning and RSS made the system inflexible and inefficient, he said. Accordingly, he said, the board of the centre recommended to the Higher Council for Science and Technology the setting up of a separate institution which will coordinate the collection of information at the national level.

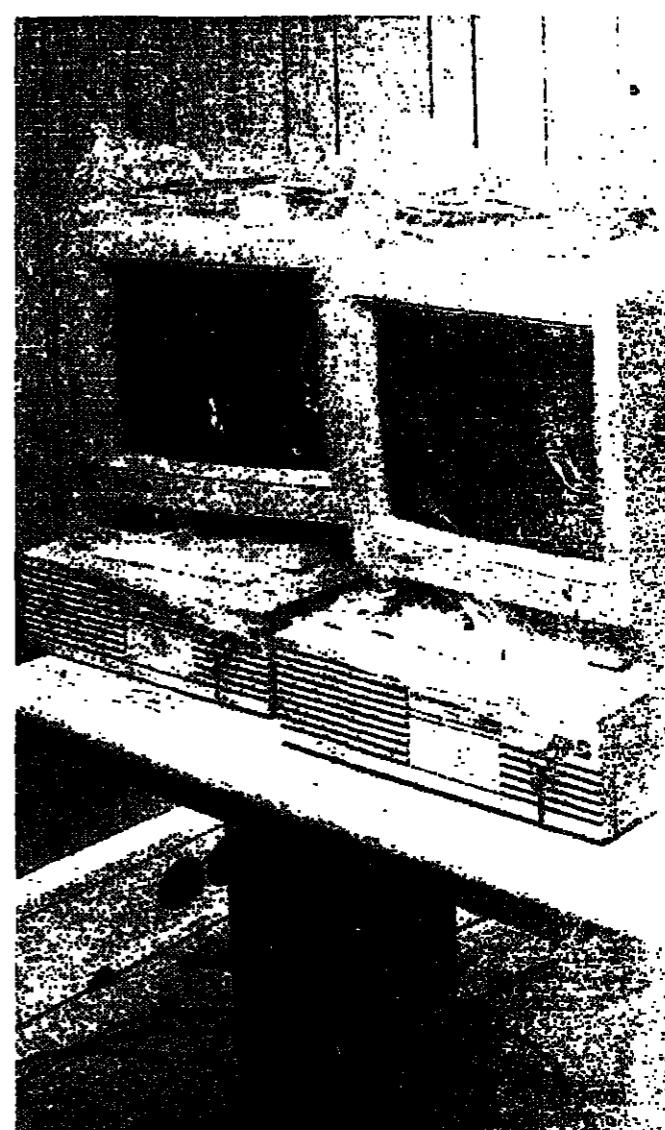
Dr. Nusseir said the new specialized National Information Centre, which is associated with the Higher Council for Science and Technology, will coordinate information with a view to building a national information system in Jordan.

The centre would "prepare, manage and coordinate economic, social, scientific and technical information," in support of development plans in the country, Dr. Nusseir said. He said the current system fails to offer users updated information on fast changing areas and other necessary statistics. The new centre, he said, would make the process of obtaining information easy because of its organisational structure.

"It is centralised in information coordination and decentralised in information generating, whereby every institution is required to feed in the updated information according to defined criteria," said Dr. Nusseir.

He said the new centre aims to establish a comprehensive information system and to link it with the local and foreign information banks to be utilised at the national level by the public and private sectors.

The centre, chaired by the Minister of Planning, would be administered by a committee



New centre promises researchers better access to information (Petra photo)

which would coordinate, regulate and modernise the acquisition of information.

"We aspire to establish an accessible system for obtaining information, which, at the same time, upholds the confidentiality of information," said Dr. Nusseir.

Dr. Nusseir said some challenges are obstructing the setting up of the centre such as the unwillingness of private organisations to cooperate.

"Private organisations are very wary of the system; we try to encourage the private sector to join us on the basis of mutual interests but very few are cooperating with us" Dr. Nusseir said. He attributed that to the loss

sense of information importance as a national resource. "Information is a national economic resource that has to be utilised because it is the only commodity which increases in quantity and importance when spent."

Dr. Nusseir points to the need for setting up required infrastructure and a national telecommunication data transmission network that can generate and sustain information which has to be continually updated and checked.

That, he said, it, will heavily invest.

Dr. Nusseir said that the initial phase of the project was financed by GIZ of Germany and the International Development and Research Centre of Canada.

NEW ENGLISH SCHOOL

P.O.BOX 154 KHALDA - AMMAN
TEL: 827151, 827152, 827153, 827154 - FAX: 816364

The New English School is a private, bi-lingual establishment, which trains its students to the highest academic standards and prepares them for entrance to universities throughout Jordan, the Arabian World, the U.K., the U.S.A. and Europe.

Owing to natural growth and consolidation at British public examination level, specialist, experienced graduates are sought to teach in the coming 1993-1994 academic year. Specific subject and teacher requirements are outlined below. Applicants for all these advertised posts should be prepared to teach intelligent, highly motivated students and should be thoroughly familiar with the British I.G.C.S.E. (University of Cambridge) and 'A'Level (University of London) examination programmes.

Candidates should also be able to demonstrate a sense of commitment to whole school policy, to the area of extra-curricular activity and should be fluent in English.

Those who are interested are invited to apply, in writing, before the 31st January deadline, to Mrs. Ophelia Bishouty, Director of the School, submitting full curriculum vitae and the names and telephone numbers of two referees who must not be family members. Application forms are available from the Director's secretary at the school.

The following subject specialists are required:

(i) DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE

- a) A graduate to teach Chemistry through to I.G.C.S.E. and 'A'level.
- b) A graduate to teach Biology or a combination of both Biology and Chemistry through to I.G.C.S.E. and 'A'level standard

(ii) DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES

- a) A graduate to teach History to 'A'level
- b) A graduate to teach Economics to I.G.C.S.E. and 'A'level

(iii) DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

- a) A graduate to teach English as a first language and possibly Literature to I.G.C.S.E.
- b) A graduate to teach English as a second language to I.G.C.S.E. level (two posts available)

(iv) DEPARTMENT OF PERFORMING ARTS

- a) A graduate to teach Music and Drama to students in grades 7,8 and 9.

(v) DEPARTMENT OF MATHS

- a) A graduate to teach Maths to I.G.C.S.E., A/S and/or 'A'level

(vi) DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTING

- a) A graduate to teach Computing to I.G.C.S.E. and 'A' level

ALL APPLICANTS FOR THE ABOVE POSTS MUST BE ABLE TO TEACH THEIR SUBJECT IN THE ENGLISH MEDIUM.

Jordan Times

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Ghastly weapons

THE CHEMICAL weapons treaty signed in Paris recently completes 24 years of talks and aims at eliminating a whole class of ghastly weapons of war. Even such formerly "obstinate" nations as China, Pakistan and Russia intend to impress their signatures on the agreement. Why then are the majority of the Arab League states not signing the accord even at the expense of looking churlish in the eyes of the rest of the world?

The fact is that the Arab League has supported the objective of eliminating these weapons, properly described in the 1989 Paris resolution as "abhorrent to civilised countries, even in the context of conflict." Most of the Arab states, however, have withheld their signatures for precisely the same reason that the Israelis signed the agreement. The convention, although "an advanced legal instrument" and "a good agreement" in itself, as one Jordanian official put it, remains flawed because it "starts from the middle" on chemical arsenals, thus ignoring more destructive weapons in the region. Consequently, the accord abets Tel Aviv's shell game of hiding its own continuing nuclear programme under a series of declarations against weapons of terror.

Indeed, the concept that failure to achieve a comprehensive solution to such horrific weapons is strategically counterproductive has been effectively admitted by the U.S. State Department with respect to last week's changes in the guidelines for the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). The 22-member MTCR now denies the transfer of missiles, regardless of whether the payload or range capacities fit chemical or nuclear weapons, to countries they presume will use them with weapons of mass destruction. The U.S. thus accepts that all such weapons, whether nuclear, biological or chemical, are destabilising and hazardous to a region.

Unfortunately for the Arab World, the new MTCR guidelines now hinge upon a judgement of intentions (although presumably the previous 500-kg and 300-km restrictions will still apply). This may allow certain Western governments to contend that the Israelis do not intend to marry their Lance and Jericho missiles with weapons of mass destruction.

But to the contrary, many experts, including Paul Warnke, the former director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, claim that the Israelis are already on record as having deployed nuclear weapons under battlefield conditions, specifically during the 1973 war. At that time the Israelis are believed to have had around 20 such weapons, according to American investigative journalist Seymour Hersh. Today the Israelis may have as many as 200 weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear-tipped missiles.

Thus the underlying assumption which permits Western governments to overlook the Israeli programme even as they clamp down on other states in the region — that the Israelis can be trusted to behave responsibly with such weapons — needs to be challenged more fundamentally.

The road taken since the 1925 Geneva protocol, which banned the use but not the possession of chemical weapons, may one day prove a helpful path from enmity towards greater amity in international affairs. But there are still some major obstacles to be removed before the Arab states relinquish yet another bargaining point. Regional security must be carefully and comprehensively constructed.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

FOLLOWING THE latest U.S.-led aggression on Iraq, the chief of staff of the French Armed Forces and the U.S. President-elect Bill Clinton have declared that more attacks would be launched on Iraq, said Al Ra'i daily Saturday. The paper said that these statements are very serious and indicate that the war on Iraq is far from over and that the air raid last Wednesday was only the beginning of a series of acts of aggression. It is clear that the Western alliance is determined to terrorise the Arabs and humiliate the Iraqi people at time when the Iraqi territory is being used as arena for further acts of aggression, said the paper. It said that the time has come for the Arab capitals to launch contacts with Paris and the new U.S. administration to get clarification about these statements and to ask that aggression be halted. The Arab leaders ought to make it clear to the West that such aggression can by no means contribute towards the Middle East stability. Rivalry among the major powers, when it comes to threatening and terrorising the Arabs, is very serious indeed and could pave the ground for a total Western hegemony on the Arab Nation, said the paper. The Arab leaders ought to take the situation into consideration and take measures to fend off the danger before it is too late, added the paper.

A COLUMNIST in Sawt Al Shaab daily discussed the possibility of extending the present mandate of the Lower House of Parliament. Saad Abu Dayyeh said that postponing the general elections, due in November, would be a welcome development for many of the deputies who will save a lot of time, cash and effort on the election campaign. An extension of the present mandate means keeping the deputies in their seats, something which many deputies believe would be a favour from the government, said the writer. If that were so, the Lower House would not be so effective in controlling the executive branch's behaviour and activities; and this in turn, would lead to a situation in which Parliament and government would be appearing to be on the same side, he added. Should the elections be postponed, the people will have to keep watch over the government's behaviour and performance in various fields, in the absence of parliamentary monitoring, said the writer. He said that no doubt, with an extension, the deputies would feel they became more mature and more aware of the public interest. But, he said, it is up to the electorate to judge whether this is what would result from such an extension.

British press fights back against clampdown threat

By Allan Barker
Reuter

LONDON — The British press, one of the most vigorous and diverse in the world, is fighting with all the weapons it can muster to protect its freedom from legislative curbs.

The battle, which promises to be long and hard, follows a year of no-holds barred reporting of the troubles of the royal family and the sexual peccadilloes of a government minister that eventually forced him out of the cabinet.

A report on the press by Lawyer Sir David Calcutt to the Conservative government will not be published until the end of the month. But its key recommendations have already been leaked and include a press complaints tribunal with statutory power to impose big fines on papers that breach a new code of conduct.

It calls for ways to protect privacy with new laws against telephone bugging and against entering private property to take photographs using telephoto lenses.

The tabloids caught the minister, whose portfolio included media standards, in an extramarital affair with a struggling actress and drove him from office.

Senior press executives are angry that the threat to press freedom comes from a Conservative government, which they helped keep in power in last year's election. Left-wing Labour governments had many complaints about press treatment in the 1970s but did no more than huff and puff about it.

"Many people who support John Major and his government will find it simply unbearable that they could even contemplate the kind of measures which Calcutt recommends," commented the Evening Standard. "If it now tampers with the freedom of the press from the past will be decisive and devastating. Big brother will have been brought in by a Tory government."

This would stop such highlights of 1992 reporting as the notorious photographs of "Fergie" the

duchess of York, frolicking topless with her "financial adviser," or the transcript of a phone call apparently between Diana, the princess of Wales, and a close male friend.

Members of parliament and other parts of the British establishment have been incensed by the sensational reporting of royal stories. Diana and her husband Prince Charles, heir to the throne, have now agreed to separate.

But the argument for curbing press coverage of the royals has been undermined by revelations that some of the "intrusive" press stories about the marriage troubles of Diana and Charles were in fact planted by the royal couple.

The book "Diana, Her True Story," by Andrew Morton drew outraged criticism when it was serialised in the Sunday Times, but Diana is now believed to have cooperated with the author, at least through friends.

David Mellor, the former national heritage secretary, once warned the popular press that it was "drinking at the last chance saloon" and told it to watch its step over intrusions of privacy.

The tabloids caught the minister, whose portfolio included media standards, in an extramarital affair with a struggling actress and drove him from office.

The talks desperately need the guidance that the U.S. promised at Madrid and then withdrew when the presidential campaign began. All the parties acknowledge that without strong American intercession, they will not reach an agreement. Bill Clinton as president must give the negotiations a new start.

Though a Bush-Baker creation, the talks are not a partisan issue. As U.S. foreign policy issues go, they are without the traps of Bosnia and Somalia while promising bigger gains. Washington must end the risk of another Arab-Israeli war or a war against a third party with Israel and the Arabs on opposite sides.

What better symbol of the continued American commitment to

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Good reasons pushed imports off target

By Dr. Fahed Al Faneek

The large gap in Jordan's balance of trade was always one of the major structural weaknesses in the Jordanian economy, for which an economic adjustment programme was adopted. Therefore, the widening of the trade gap during 1992, resulting from a surge in imports, is supposed to be a cause of worry. This essential economic indicator obviously went sharply in the opposite direction.

According to the programme, imports should decrease by 6.3 per cent from \$2,571 million in 1991 to \$2,434 million in 1992. Instead, imports rose by 16.9 per cent, to \$3,005 million, an increase of 23.5 per cent above the target. Exports also grew in 1992 by 15 per cent, thus exceeding the target by a moderate rate of 6.3 per cent, to reach \$1,302 million. Thus net deficit in the balance of trade rose from \$1,439 million in 1991 to \$1,703 million in 1992, which is higher than the target by \$494 million.

This is the general picture as suggested by the crude facts and figures. While we do not like to see this happen, we believe that it is not alarming. Following are some reasons why we should not worry:

The first reason is that the trade deficit was the only indicator to go wrong. Most other economic indicators gave a positive reading and were far better than the targets set by the programme.

The second reason is that part of the increase in imports took place to accommodate the high growth of imports, especially of

raw materials and energy.

The third reason is that most, if not all, of the increase of imports was meant to accommodate new investments and capital formation, especially construction and new houses, the installation of new industries, and the expansion of old ones to cope with a greater demand.

The fourth reason is that part of the imports represents what the returnees from Kuwait brought back with them, such as cars, furniture and equipment. Such imports were brought to the country without having to pay for them in foreign exchange.

The fifth reason is the high growth of population, coupled with a rise in the standard of living, resulting from a high growth in the economy, to the order of 15 per cent in current prices, or 11.7 per cent in real terms. 1992 was the first year in a decade when the per capita income has increased in constant prices.

The most important reason why we should not worry about the jump in imports is that it did not come about at the expense of the reserves in foreign exchange. A major part was financed by expatriates' savings which were kept abroad. The fact that the country's reserves grew by \$200 million in 1992 is an evidence that the imports were not in excess of our means.

The substantial increase in imports during 1992 can be explained by the above-mentioned reasons, yet we should deal with this indicator with the utmost caution in 1993.

A doable peace

By Milton Viorst

AFTER SIX months of aimless meandering, followed by Israel's aborted deportation of 400 Islamic fundamentalists, the Arab-Israeli peace talks stand on the threshold of collapse — yet Arab-Israeli peace has never been closer.

It is astonishing, when one examines the positions of the adversaries, how little actually separates them.

Syria wants all of the Golan returned, and Israel concedes that it will have to give up some of it. Since the two have nearly identical views on security, their dispute is about the Syrian definition of peace and the remaining sliver of territory.

Israel contests no territory with Lebanon, though it occupies a strip along the border to keep out terrorists. Syria, the real power in Lebanon, has indicated that its own forces will suppress terrorism if Israel withdraws as part of a comprehensive accord. Israel requires that, given the proper assurances, it will.

Jordan has no real differences with Israel, but says it will agree only to a peace that includes the Palestinians. The real problem is Israel and the Palestinians, who agree on five years of autonomy

for the occupied territories but are far apart on the powers each will exercise. They also have differences about Jerusalem, refugees and the Israeli settlements.

Ultimately, the Palestinians want nationhood, and Israel is not yet prepared to concede it to them. These disputes are serious, to be sure, but can they be called irreconcilable if no real effort has been made to bridge them?

Both Arabs and Israelis have made clear that they do not want the talks to fail.

After half-century of war, they understand that peace is better, and they want to make a deal. Each, of course, wants the best deal it can get but is prepared to settle for less than the best in place of nothing at all.

Until now, the parties have been playing domestic politics rather than looking for compromise. They have been enemies for too long to make concessions with grace; mutual suspicion runs too close to the bone. Only with American help will they climb down from their platforms to deal constructively with their disputes.

The time has got to be now. The present leaders — Yitzhak Rabin, King Hussein, Hafez Al-Assad and Yasser Arafat — are all committed to a settlement. But they are mortal, physically and politically, and there are enemies lurking outside their camps. Israel's blow-up with Hamas illustrates how fragile the negotiating table actually is.

George Bush and James Baker have won a place in history by carrying the parties over the barrier to face-to-face talks at Madrid. Though a year has passed, the time has not been wasted. Arabs and Israelis have become used to talking to each other, and that is no small achievement.

Now it is up to Bill Clinton and Warren Christopher to show their political skills by bringing the negotiations to a successful end. Failure will mean tragedy for the Middle East. Peace will be a triumph for the new administration and for America.

The writer covers the Middle East for the New Yorker. His article is reprinted from the Washington Post.



to incorporate the entire West Bank into Israel. Mr. Rabin's favoured solution is a "separate peace" with Syria (which is extremely unlikely) while, at the same time, pursuing a "solution" for the West Bank in which the majority of the territory's Palestinian population — but not the land itself — would be subject to "autonomy." It is almost inconceivable that Mr. Rabin would cede a swath of West Bank territory contiguous to Jordan to either Jordan or to a fully independent Palestinian authority (which he opposes in any case), because his fire-line of settlements and military outposts along the Jordan-West Bank border would stand in the way of any such contingency.

Labour's hope in the past had been to assign the inhabitants of the more densely populated portions of the West Bank to some form of Jordanian control at the local level, but the realisation of such a goal would now be dependent upon the alienation of the Palestinian peace delegation from their Jordanian counterparts, an unlikely event at this stage. Since the summer of 1988, when the Kingdom of Jordan formally renounced its quasi-sovereign interest in West Bank affairs, Labour's vision of Israel and Jordan collaborating with each other to prevent Palestinian national aspirations from ever being real-

ised — that centrepiece of the Alon Plan known as the "Jordian option" — ceased to exist. Even if Mr. Rabin does not try to revive the Jordian option, his vision does not do much for the Palestinians; it aims at defusing the Palestine question by settling it short of statehood, allowing Israel to maintain its strategic dominance over the West Bank without being required to absorb its inhabitants into the ruling state structure.

Cantonised islands

Mr. Rabin's proposals assign to Israel control the most crucial aspects of Palestinian life, namely, defence, foreign and economic policy, internal political security, and, most importantly, the natural resources (land and water) which are the Palestinians' lifeline.

The Palestinians would be responsible for the policing and pacification of their own people (since the Jordanians have already eschewed any such role for themselves). And this would be taking place in territory not contiguous with any Arab country, in two cantonised islands — the northern and southern West Bank — which would be completely surrounded by Israel, just as Lesotho is totally surrounded by South Africa. The result is that the densely populated Arab regions in the territories, including

the term "self-rule," of course, is a misleading euphemism in that it is applied to the Palestinian people but not to their land, granting them some "autonomy" in the conduct of their own "local" affairs. (In an area so small in size and so great in importance as the West Bank, use of the term "local" to describe Palestinian affairs is especially disingenuous; everything is "national," even the most seemingly mundane aspects of daily life.) The term "self-determination," on the other hand, represents the Wilsonian concept of the right of every nation to determine its own future in its own country and hence, has become the recognised label for Palestinian statehood and political independence.

Mr. Rabin clearly believes in "self-rule" as an end in itself, not as a stepping-stone on the way to self-determination. If Mr. Rabin chooses to handle the peace process the old way, assuming Palestinian passivity, which no longer exists, and trying to raise worn-out Camp David formulae such as "separate peace" and "autonomy" — then his attempt to rebuild good relations with the U.S. could still be frustrated at some time in the future when America decides to pressure the Israelis to negotiate in good faith for a real peace that is both just and lasting — Middle East International.

Neutralising the damage

This is why Labour Zionists to equate such an eventual destruction of Israel as they know it. Currently, the combined percentage of Arabs in the territories and in the pre-1967 areas of Israel is 37 per cent of the total. Because of the higher Arab birth rate, demographers predict that an Arab majority will exist in the combined areas Israel now controls within three or four decades, and that the flood of Russian immigrants to Israel, so desperately sought by Labour, will delay the inevitable perhaps only a decade longer. Therefore, however ironically, Labour's main criticism of Likud is that the continuation of the latter's policies would have gradually led to the end of Israel's existence. Labour dove Abba Eban was publicly warning Israeli citizens of this perceived threat as early as 1984. The rationale is: had Likud's

Iraq offers fresh compromise

(Continued from page 1)

The Iraqi government agreed Friday to allow U.N. weapons inspectors to fly into Baghdad, promising to end one issue that led to bombing of southern Iraq on Wednesday by U.S., British and French planes.

However, U.N. officials said the offer did not go far enough because the Iraqis refused to guarantee the safety of the U.N. flights. Iraq claims the skies are dangerous because of allied flights over northern and southern Iraq to enforce a ban on Iraqi aircraft flying there.

In Camp David, Maryland, Mr. Bush said he was consulting with his allies and the United Nations on the new Iraqi compromise offer on U.N. flights.

"We have no response now," Mr. Bush told reporters at his Camp David retreat. "We're interested in knowing what the United Nation's response is."

"His (Aziz) offer just was

announced and we'll just have to wait and see how it's regarded. We don't do these things unilaterally, we consult with the others," Mr. Bush said.

Mr. Bush spoke to reporters as he welcomed Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney for a weekend at the Camp David presidential retreat.

Officials at the White House, the Defense Department and the State Department — none willing to speak on the record — said the administration considered Iraq's response unsatisfactory.

One Defense Department official said: "We reserve the right to strike without notice. That hasn't changed any."

Meanwhile, Iraq continued its harassment of allied flights patrolling over the no-fly zones.

A senior Defense Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Iraq fired on three coalition aircraft patrolling the zones Friday.

The Iraqis aimed anti-aircraft artillery at two coalition aircraft in the south and one U.S. Air Force in the north, said the official.

The Iraqi fire fell "well short out of range," the official said.

Asked how close U.S. forces came to renewing an attack against Iraq, the official said, "you can say we took one short step back from the brink. We're still on the edge."

Mr. Aziz, wearing the olive-green uniform of the ruling Baath Party, accused the United States and its allies of constantly raising minor issues to misrepresent Iraq's record of compliance with Gulf war ceasefire resolutions.

"Secondary issues were put in the forefront of the situation deliberately by the Bush administration and its allies to confuse the situation and mix the cards," he said.

He listed Iraqi retrieval of weapons and other property in the territory now designated part of Kuwait and the issue of six Iraqi police posts on the Kuwaiti side of the demilitarized zone.

The main issue in the current confrontation is the no-fly zones. Iraq has rejected the no-fly zone that was imposed (in the south) unilaterally by the government of the United States, Britain and France," he said.

He said the same governments had acted aggressively against Iraq to impose that zone and one in the north — a reference to Wednesday's air strikes which killed 19 people.

"We have decided to resist the aggression and we are resisting it now by all means, political and military."

In answer to a question, he said Iraqi air defence missile batteries had orders to shoot at intruding planes at will.

Mr. Aziz said the issue of U.N. flights had also been used to distort the situation.

Iraq had told the U.N. it

should temporarily halt its flights

for safety reasons because of

Western hostility. "A great fuss

was created because of that sim-

ple explanation," he said.

In Bahrain, U.N. official Doug Englund said it seemed unlikely that flights to Iraq would resume Sunday.

Mr. Englund, reacting to Mr.



Iraqi children watch a civilian building in Basra, southern Iraq, hit in Wednesday's allied air raid

AP photo

Iraqi women holding posters of President Saddam Hussein and anti-U.S. placards demonstrate in Baghdad (AFP photo)

In Boston, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director Robert Gates said Friday that there is no indication Iraq intends to honour U.N. resolutions that ended the Gulf war two years ago.

He said Iraq has retained capabilities in all programmes of

weapons of mass destruction and if left unchecked, would aim for full-scale resumption of the conflict.

"There is no indication that he has changed his objectives, his personal style of governance or his ambitions," Mr. Gates said.

Fateh leaders meet on reform

(Continued from page 1)

the rising fundamentalist Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, in the Israeli-occupied territories.

One source said the issue of Mr. Arafat's succession for the leadership of both Fateh and the PLO in case something happened to him is expected to be raised.

The debate on the succession and the sharing in the decision-making process has been pushed by those who complain of Mr. Arafat's tight control over the PLO and its funds.

Some critics accuse Mr. Arafat of using the money to buy influence among Palestinian factions.

There was considerable doubt that Mr. Arafat's critics would be able to put together and adequate challenge or to force him to form a collective leadership that would erode his power or limit his authority.

Sources close to the meetings said one issue expected to raise a

heated debate among the members will be a visit made by the PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Abbas to Saudi Arabia last week.

During his visit, Mr. Abbas publicly apologized to the Saudis and other Gulf states for PLO support for Iraq during the Gulf crisis over Kuwait.

The apology by Mr. Abbas, also a veteran leader of Fateh, drew criticism from the movement's rank-and-file. Many members considered it humiliating.

The Arab-Israeli peace talks and the performance of the Palestinian team is expected to be high on the meeting's agenda, with calls anticipated from members for reassessing the Palestinian participation in the deadlocked negotiations.

The Palestinians said they cannot go to the next round of the negotiations until more than 400 Palestinians expelled by Israel are returned home.

Aziz's statement, told Reuters: "Based on the fact that the Iraqi response seemed to be conditional, it seems unlikely that everything will be resolved so we can fly tomorrow."

Mr. Aziz repeatedly separated U.N. sanctions from the dictates which he said were imposed on Iraq unilaterally by the United States, Britain and France.

From the beginning, he said, Iraq had notified the United Nations of its concern over flying over the "no-fly" zone.

A "deliberate attempt was made by the Bush administration" to make it appear that Iraq was violating U.N. resolutions and challenging the will of the international community, he said.

Mr. Aziz, who recently represented Iraq at the United Nations, cited U.N. officials as saying Iraq had met most of its obligations under the Gulf war ceasefire.

Given that, he said Iraq should be allowed to sell oil to pay for humanitarian aid. But he said that U.S. influence at the U.N. had undermined Iraq.

In Bahrain, U.N. official Doug Englund said it seemed unlikely that flights to Iraq would resume Sunday.

Mr. Englund, reacting to Mr.

UNIKOM's Khabbaj said that the recent confrontations between observers and Iraqis removing four silkworm missiles from the zone prompted a request "two or three days ago" for armed peacekeeping troops.

"Egypt regrets the latest escalation of the situation in the Gulf," Foreign Minister Amr Musa told reporters.

"Egypt is keen about the unity of Iraq and the safety of its people," he said.

He criticised what he termed "adventure committed by the Iraqi leadership which impose unnecessary dangers on the people."

"We call on the Iraqi leadership to abide by the Security Council resolutions and refrain from taking further measures that may bring more problems to the Iraqi people or may increase tension in the region," Mr. Musa added.

British Embassy Annual Notice To All British Nationals Living In Jordan

Have you registered with the British Embassy. If you are a British citizen and live in Jordan, please contact the British Embassy, Consular Section, in order to obtain a registration form.

If you have registered during 1992, please confirm your continuing presence in Jordan by re-registering as soon as possible. Please also notify the Consular Section about any changes of address and/or telephone number. Such confirmation is in the interests of all British nationals in Jordan.

If names are not re-registered within three months the Embassy will be obliged to consider that those concerned have left the country. The names will accordingly be deleted from the register.

If you are a citizen of a Commonwealth country which does not have an Embassy or Consulate in Jordan, please ask the British Embassy, Consular Section, about registration formalities.

The British Embassy is located in Abdoun, near the Orthodox Club. Telephone 823100. The Post Office Box Number is 87.

The Consular Section is open from Sunday until Thursday 0830 - 1200 hours.

Evictees: Aid could prolong exile

(Continued from page 1)

The statement did not elaborate on the clarifications Mr. Hariri sought, but it quoted him as telling Mr. Pfeiffer that an ICRC helicopter that would be used for the mission should not fly over territory controlled by Lebanese government troops.

It would fly only over Israel or Israel's self-designated "security zone" in South Lebanon.

Israel Friday approved the mission, allowing the Geneva-based humanitarian organisation to bring to the group medical supplies, letters, water distillation tablets and legal documents to aid attorneys appealing the expulsions.

Israel had previously refused to send aid to the men, but last week allowed a one-time visit to the camp by ICRC delegates.

On that trip, the ICRC evacuated two men. Bassem Siyuri, 16, the youngest of the evictees, was allowed back to his home in the occupied West Bank town of Hebron, and Zohair Lobbadeh,

suffering from kidney malfunction, was hospitalised in the "security zone" town of Marjayoun.

The new Israeli concession was apparently aimed at easing U.N. pressure on Israel and came after Foreign Minister Shimon Peres met with U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali.

Dr. Ghali had threatened to impose sanctions on Israel if it met its refusal to ease the situation on the deportees.

Oded Ben-Ami, spokesman for Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, said Friday the ICRC relief delegation would also bring back nine of 15 Palestinians, who Israel says were expelled in error.

Israel has refused an ICRC request to evacuate seven sick evictees, saying these first have to be examined by Israeli doctors to determine if their lives were in jeopardy.

The Israeli supreme court on Sunday is to hear arguments on the legality of the expulsions, presented by some of the expelled men's families.

ARABIC FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

The Language Centre at the University of Jordan announces that the intensive course in modern standard Arabic for speakers of other languages will commence on January 30, 1993, and will last for 16 weeks.

The programme is intensive and classes meet in the morning for 20 hours per week, Saturday-Wednesday. Evening classes meet three days a week: Saturday, Monday and Wednesday.

Those Interested, please call at the Language Centre for registration. (Registration begins on Saturday 23.1.1993)

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Relief for Bosnian Muslims blocked

(Continued from page 1)

protect Bosnian Muslims from Serb attacks.

Last year, the OIC threatened to break the U.N. embargo on former Yugoslavia and allow member states to deliver weapons if the United Nations did not act by Friday.

However, Mr. Aksin did not threaten any immediate action.

"Assistance that has been provided to the Bosnians has been sidetracked by the Serbs, confiscated if you will, for their own use. We don't feel that Unprofor (U.N. Protection Force) is carrying out its mandate," Mr. Aksin said.

The Security Council must somehow pursue this matter with more energy and more vigor in order to persuade the Serbs to be flexible and to be amenable to negotiations," he said.

Bosnia's rebel Serb leader Radovan Karadzic said Saturday he expected a tough time persuading the "parliament" to his side-declared republic to endorse an international peace proposal next week.

"It is going to be a very hard time for me, a very hard time," he told Reuters at his mountain headquarters 15 kilometres from Bosnia's Serb besieged capital Sarajevo.

"The radicals are rising up because I am too moderate, I make too many unilateral concessions about prisons, about peace talks, about ceasefire."

The remarks contrasted with optimism Mr. Karadzic voiced on Friday that his rebel state's assembly would embrace the proposal he accepted at a Geneva peace conference.

He agreed last Tuesday to

accept a constitutional framework for a post-war Bosnia drawn up by international mediators Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen at peace talks in Geneva.

The European Community has given the Serbs until next Tuesday to accept a peace package aimed at ending nine months of civil war in Bosnia, or face U.N. military action.

But his Vice-President Biljana Plavsic has already said the Bosnian Serb assembly meeting next Tuesday will reject it.

JORDAN BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

By Aleen Bamayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Basketball fans should not expect any surprises in Sunday's matches of the first division basketball championship as Al Hussein play Al Abbasi and Al Ahli meet Al Jalil at Al Ahli Court, while Al Watani play Al Orthodoxi and Al Jazireh meet Homentmen at Al Orthodoxi Court.

Second-placed Al Orthodoxi will definitely have no problem defeating Al Watani, as they have mercilessly crushed all their opponents except Al Ahli — by scoring over the 100 point mark throughout the first and second rounds of the competition which still has five stages to go before the top two teams, Al Ahli and 1991 titleholders Al Orthodoxi, clash on Jan. 26.

Meanwhile, Al Ahli who currently lead the standings with 18 points after their win over Al Orthodoxi in the final of the first round, will play Al Jalil who moved up to fifth place.

Al Hussein — currently placed sixth as they have a postponed match against Al Jazireh — are set to score an easy win over Al Abbasi who have lost all their matches and are practically relegated unless an extraordinary miracle happens.

Third-placed Al Jazireh, who are well on course of capturing third place this season, play seventh-placed Homentmen who, like Al Abbasi, have nearly lost all chances of keeping their place in the First Division.

In the latest matches played Friday night, Al Jazireh managed an 82-79 win over Al Jalil.

Jamal Bubeiri, Ghafah Esmabi, and Khaled Abu Namous, saved Al Jazireh of losing the match and enabled them to keep third place for now. The first half ended 36-36. Al Jalil put up a big effort to secure the win but nevertheless lost the match by a three-point difference.

Al Jalil, third place winners last year, have not shown their usual form this season and pulled out of the first match of the competition. However, they are now set to advance their standing after a 78-69 win over Al Watani earlier in the week.

In another match, Al Watani scored a crucial 77-59 win over Homentmen who now have a difficult task of winning three matches to avoid relegation.

Al Watani won the first half 35-30, but afterwards expanded their lead to 49-35 thanks to the energetic efforts of playmaker Maher Zahidi and Nadim Nahas. Homentmen's Vicken Avakian, Vasken Ajemian and Omar Shami's efforts were to no avail as the team lacked concentration, eventually losing the match and the chance to stay among First Division teams.

In other matches, Al Orthodoxi scored two crushing wins, defeating Al Abbasi 146-62 Sunday, and Homentmen 166-58 earlier in the week. Al Ahli won both their matches scoring a 94-45 win over Al Hussein and thrashing Al Abbasi 191-30.

STANDINGS

TEAM	W	L	SF	SA	Pts
Al Ahli	9	—	932	451	18
Al Orthodoxi	8	1	1222	588	17
Al Jazireh	5	3	656	618	13
Al Watani	4	5	571	707	13
Al Jalil	4	5	644	644	12
Al Hussein	4	4	654	696	12
Homentmen	1	8	593	991	10
Al Abbasi	—	9	464	1041	9

*Hussein-Jazireh have a postponed match. Al Jalil have pulled out of one match

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Norwich regain lead

LONDON (R) — Norwich drew 1-1 with Coventry to regain the lead in the English Premier League Saturday, but Liverpool's gloom deepened with a 2-0 defeat at Wimbledon. Chris Sutton's 13th minute opener for Norwich ended the club's five-match goal famine in the league which began with defeat an Manchester United December 12. Mick Quinn equalised for Coventry in the 58th minute. Norwich are one point ahead of Manchester United, Blackburn Rovers 1-0 winners at Oldham, and Aston Villa. Goals by John Fashanu, a 36th-minute penalty, and Steve Cotterill saw Wimbledon do the double over Liverpool, still reeling from their humiliating F.A. Cup defeat by Second Division Bolton in midweek. Nottingham Forest continued their revival with a second successive league win, 3-0 at home to Chelsea, but remain bottom.

Johnson finishes third in 50m

HAMILTON (R) — Sprinter Ben Johnson had bragged he might set a world record but didn't even win his own race while a strutting racewalker, American Debbie Lawrence, did set a world indoor record at the Hamilton Spectator Indoor Games Friday. Johnson, trying to recapture the world's fastest man title he forewent at the 1988 Olympics because of steroid use, was left in the blocks and finished third behind fellow Canadian Bruny Surin and American Jon Drummond in the 50 metres. Surin set a Canadian record of 5.67 seconds. Johnson finished in 5.73. Johnson, who once prided himself on being the quickest starter in the world, was disqualified at a meet last week for false-starting. He said then that he was just too fast for the officials, but might set a record here.

Dmitrenko wins European men's title

HELSINKI (AP) — Dmitri Dmitrenko of Ukraine held onto his lead to win the men's event Friday at the European Figure Skating Championship. Philippe Candeloro and Eric Millet gave France second and third overall as they skated the top two free programmes of the evening. The 1992 World Junior champion spiced his routine with eight triple jumps which was good enough for him to hold onto the top position he had after Wednesday's short programme.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIAH HIRSH
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GETTING THERE'S THE PROBLEM

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH	♦ 8 5 ♥ Q J 6 4 2 ♦ Q 6 3 ♦ J 7 4
EAST	♦ 3 ♦ Q 6 4 2 ♥ 9 7 5 ♦ K 10 8 ♦ 10 9 8 5 4 ♦ K J 7 ♦ A K 10 9 ♦ 8 3 2
SOUTH	♦ A K J 10 9 7 ♥ A 3 ♦ A 2 ♦ Q 6 5
The bidding:	South West North East 1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass 1 ♠ Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♦. Handling one's entries is a ticklish business. Like Alice in the Noël Coward song, declarer managed to get there, and to stay there, until the job was undoubtedly done.

With 18 high-card points, mostly prime, and a self-sufficient six-card suit, the jump to four spades was a fair expression of the value of South's hand. Had there been even

one sure entry to dummy, the contract would have been an excellent one.

West led the king of clubs and declarer made a fine play by jettisoning the queen. Since West almost surely held the ace, the jack of clubs would then be an entry to dummy if three rounds of clubs lived. West continued with ace of clubs and another, and the first hurdle was cleared when East followed to all three rounds.

Declarer took advantage of the good fortune by running the queen of hearts — had that lost to the king, declarer might still make the contract if the queen of trumps was singleton. The eight of spades would be an entry to the table to allow South to take a diamond discard on the jack of hearts after clearing the ace.

When the queen held, declarer needed just one more break — finding the queen of spades with East. Declarer abandoned hearts in favor of leading the eight of spades, underplaying the seven from hand. That permitted declarer to repeat the spade finesse, which neutralized the 4-1 break.

With 18 high-card points, mostly

prime, and a self-sufficient six-card

suit, the jump to four spades was a

fair expression of the value of

South's hand. Had there been even

NBA ROUNDUP

LOS ANGELES (R) — The Los Angeles Lakers may be trailing the Portland Trail Blazers in the standings, but you wouldn't know it by looking at their record head-to-head.

Sedale Threat scored 22 points and Vlade Divac had 15 points and six blocked shots Friday to lead the Lakers to a 99-96 win over Portland, their third victory over last year's Western Conference champions in as many meetings this season.

But the 19-15 Lakers, who lost the night before to their cross-town rival Clippers, are still 3½ games behind Portland, which is in third place in the Pacific Division at 22-11.

Way ahead of them both is Phoenix, the NBA's best at 25-6 after Charles Barkley scored 31 points, including the 15,000th career, to lead the Suns to a 107-99 victory over the slumping Miami Heat.

The biggest rookie of them all, Shaquille O'Neal, had 22 points, 12 rebounds and four blocked shots to lead the Orlando Magic to their first-ever win at the Boston Garden, a 113-94 triumph that snapped the Celtics' seven-game winning streak.

Kenny Anderson scored five of his 21 points in overtime to lead the New Jersey Nets to their third win in a row.

The Sixers' Hersey Hawkins led all scorers with 35 points.

The Nets pulled away to lead third-place Boston by two games but are still 1½ games behind the Atlantic Division-leading New York Knicks, who handed the Dallas Mavericks their 14th consecutive loss, 107-93.

In Chicago, Michael Jordan posted his fourth triple-double of the season with 26 points, 12 rebounds and 10 assists as the Bulls handed the Golden State Warriors their third successive loss 122-101.

The Central Division-leading Bulls have won three of their last four games and six of their last seven at home.

Chris Mullin led the Warriors with 21 points. At Indiana, Larry Nance scored 19 of his 24 points in Cleveland's team-record, 83-point second half as the Cavaliers rallied from a 15-point halftime deficit to beat the Pacers 132-120.

Huber, who Friday beat world number four Arantxa Sanchez Vicario in the quarter-final, proved too strong for Frazier in the first semi-final.

Capriati upsets Sabatini, Sampras wins NSW Open

SYDNEY (R) — American Jennifer Capriati set up a teenage final in the New South Wales Open tennis tournament Saturday with a shock straight sets defeat of defending champion Gabriela Sabatini.

The fourth-seeded Capriati, 16, will play 18-year-old Anke Huber Sunday after the German had little trouble in defeating unseeded American Amy Frazier 6-4 6-3 in an earlier semifinal.

The talented Capriati, who can be frustratingly inconsistent, crushed Sabatini 6-4 6-2, playing sizzling tennis in the second set after both women had struggled in a first set which produced five breaks of serve.

Sabatini's service let her down badly. She sent down seven double faults, lost three service games in each set and won only 50 per cent of her first serves.

The hard-hitting Capriati, who has gained confidence during the tournament, pounced on a series of short serves, dominating rallies that the Argentinian chased to retrieve.

Capriati, who broke Sabatini's serve at the start of both sets, said she ranked the win as among the best in her career and said it should put her in the right mood for next week's Australian Open, the year's first Grand Slam event.

"I just tried to play my game and not let her move me or let her play her game, coming into the net and volleying," seventh-ranked Capriati told reporters.

Meanwhile, Pete Sampras, desperate to show that his sole Grand Slam win in 1990 was not a fluke, served a warning to the two tennis top guns with a straight sets win over Thomas Muster in the New South Wales Open final.

The world number three, who has been in superb touch all week, beat the Austrian 7-6 6-1, playing almost flawless tennis in the second set to win the curtain-raiser to next week's Australian Open, the year's first Grand Slam event.

Muster, the seventh seed, had a sniff of a chance against the young American in an enthralling first set in the \$535,000 tournament.

Sampras, who won five tournaments last year but has failed to win a Grand Slam event since the United States Open, now has his sights on the world's top two, Jim Courier and Stefan Edberg.

"I am going into the Open pretty confident and we will see what happens," he told reporters.

"I think I am playing better and better."

But Sampras was typically modest about his form in the match. "I don't think I played great tennis this week but I played sharp tennis and just happened to win the tournament," he said.



Jennifer Capriati

ment when he had a set point in the tie-break at 7-6.

But the cool Sampras saved the point and finally took the set at 9-7 with a searing forehand drive down the line.

The super-fit Muster ran, chased and scrambled for every ball in the second set despite the scorching heat but Sampras, with his serve working brilliantly, dominated the net and put away a series of winners.

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HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY JANUARY 17, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Today's forecast reveals one that's fine for communicating, especially ideas or abstract concepts, and philosophies can now be drafted with ease. Where agreements are established remain realistic.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Do nothing that can cause one in a prominent position to look askance at your activities but tonight you can have a fine time with progressive friends.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 18) Be on the lookout for practical new ways to be more successful and don't secretly try a new method while tonight surprise happiness is yours.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Don't allow a tiresome obligation to keep you from getting off with a good friend to gain some personal goals while tonight the social whirl is exciting.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You and members of your own household are not apt to see eye to eye today so make a point to wait until later in the day before you get together.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) An associate can keep you from some worldly activity that is helpful to your best interests if you permit while tonight go out on the town.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) A work sense of duty at work can keep you from accepting some new and important benefit so be wide awake to change, tonight meet a new associate.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Practical and pleasant interests

now can collide headon for you so plan money and tasks so that you have each on a common sense basis for the future.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A contest between a family member and an outside associate should not now be permitted to engross you time but be fair to each ones standpoint.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You need to apply yourself in concentrate fashion in your work while you are doing it despite a restlessness to be off to some new activities.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Practical business matters and mental creative ideas via for top priority with you today and both are important so be efficient with them.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You and members of your own household are not apt to see eye to eye today so make a point to wait until later in the day before you get together.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Let's not let a private concern keep you from getting out and accomplishing matters which you have not been able to get in before this time.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You would be wise to budget your assets and your personal expenses so you will be able to make them work in greater harmony in the days ahead.

THE BETTER HALF

By Harris



Economy

JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, JANUARY 17, 1993 7

Economist urges new investment strategy in southern Africa

HARARE (R) — A leading Zimbabwean economist has urged southern Africa to pursue policies that attract foreign investment, saying socialism in parts of the region had frightened many investors away in the 1980s.

Professor Tony Hawkins of the University of Zimbabwe said there was need for "new strategies... aimed at integrating

the region with the world economy, thereby reversing the 1980s process of marginalisation.

United Nations figures show that in the 1980s, southern Africa's share of global investment was less than 0.2 per cent.

Wars in Angola, Mozambique and Namibia, the socialist policies of Zimbabwe and Zambia

and apartheid in South Africa, made the region unattractive to investors, he said.

Zimbabwe's post-independence experience (with socialism in the first 10 years off black majority rule up to 1990) is a case study of how to manage economic growth," Mr. Hawkins said at a regional economic conference.

U.S. to cut some loans to Jamaica, Argentina

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States has agreed to reduce the debt owed by Argentina and Jamaica under foreign assistance lending programmes, the Treasury Department announced Friday.

The agreement was part of the programme called "enterprise for the Americas Initiative," designed to help economic and structural changes in central and south America.

The announcement also said the United States expects to enter into an Americas framework agreement with both governments,

which would provide that interest on the remaining debt be paid in local currency. The Treasury said Argentina's foreign assistance debt was reduced by 10 per cent from approximately \$38.1 million to \$34.3 million. If a framework agreement is reached, about \$3.1 million in local currency would be generated over 15 years for environmental and child development projects.

The plan calls for 1,636 workers to take early retirement and for a further 961 to be laid off.

Registration of cars made by Automobiles Peugeot and its sister car division, Automobiles Citroen, nevertheless surged by 26 per cent in France in December, said the spokesman.

Registrations rose to 67,141 compared with the same month a year earlier.

The sharp increase chiefly reflects government incentives that allowed car buyers to save 2,000 francs (\$377) if they bought a car with an environmentally friendly catalytic converter.

The Peugeot group's share of the French market increased slightly to 30.3 per cent in December from 30 per cent a year before. December's sales performance reverses a string of negative results by the group in previous months.

Automobiles Peugeot plans to cut nearly 2,600 jobs in '93

PARIS (AP) — Anticipating a decline in European car sales in 1993, Automobiles Peugeot SA will cut 2,597 jobs at four of its factories this year, the French automaker has said.

The job cuts will help Peugeot deal with an expected 4.5 per cent decrease in European car sales in 1993 and to pursue its annual objective of a 12 per cent gain in productivity, a Peugeot spokesman said.

Automobiles Peugeot is one of the auto manufacturing divisions of PSA Peugeot Citroen.

The French auto market is expected to be flat or to show a slight decline in 1993, but Peugeot executives say the German market could shrink by as much as 10 per cent compared with 1991.

The plan to trim Peugeot's workforce of 55,000 will be presented to a meeting of management and labour representatives Wednesday.

The plan calls for 1,636 workers to take early retirement and for a further 961 to be laid off.

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U.S. faces host of economic troubles as Clinton takes over

— Health care reform

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— Budget deficit

Mr. Clinton promised during the election campaign to cut the \$300 billion deficit in half in four years. But recently he's shied away from that pledge as new deficit forecasts have made that task even more daunting.

To come even closer to achieving that goal, Mr. Clinton will probably have to drop another of his campaign promises — a \$60 billion, four-year tax cut for the middle class. He may even need to raise some taxes that will hurt the middle class — such as that on petrol.

But to really come to grips with the deficit problem, Mr. Clinton will have to rein in the escalating costs of U.S. government health care programmes.

Although the economy has been expanding for six straight quarters, it has not risen fast enough to generate many new jobs. Only a little over half a

million jobs have been created in this upturn. That compares with some 3½ million at this point in past recoveries.

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— Trade

U.S. exports have been one of the few bright spots in America's economic outlook over the past two years. Mr. Clinton has said he is in favour of free trade but wants it to be fair and he will have to flesh out exactly what he means with specific decisions soon after he takes office.

Mr. Clinton has backed the North American Free Trade Agreement with Mexico and Canada but has said he wants to protect worker rights and the environment. He also must decide whether to push the global trade reforms talks going on in Geneva for almost seven years.

"America has a lot of problems today, which are beyond the reach of the president alone," Mr. Clinton said this week, summing up the difficulties he faces. "If we're going to be a high growth, high opportunity country... we must invest more. We must educate better. Some of that has to be done at every workplace in America."

The United States is being out-vested by its trade competitors overseas and that bodes ill for its ability to compete in the future.

Too much money is being spent for instant gratification and consumption and not enough is being squirreled away for the future.

Mr. Clinton has promised to spend \$20 billion of federal money annually over the next four years rebuilding America's roads, highways and bridges and investing in the technologies of the future. He's also pledged

Taiwan passes landmark trade law

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan has passed a landmark trade law committing the island to continue opening its markets while giving it legal authority to impose trade sanctions against other countries, officials said.

The law obeys GATT rules but will provide Taiwan with an important bargaining chip when it holds trade negotiations with other countries, BOFT Director-General Shueh Ke-Sheng told the semi-official Central News Agency.

In the past, Taiwan has acted in trade disputes using a host of sometimes conflicting rules and decrees. Last month it slapped an anti-dumping tax on imports from Japan of a chemical used to bleach textiles — its first such decree since 1984.

The law, passed by parliament Thursday, will aid Taiwan's application for membership in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the officials said.

"Our trade law is designed to satisfy the spirit of GATT and bring us into line with international trade practices," said Hsu Chao-Ling, deputy director-general of the Board of Foreign Trade (BOFT).

The 37-article law, the first omnibus trade measure passed since Taiwan's nationalist government took power over four decades ago, formally commits the island to free trade principles, though it does not mandate specific reforms.

It calls for trade sanctions, such as punitive tariffs and a temporary ban on imports, against countries found guilty of dumping their products or violating reciprocal agreements. Taiwan must seek negotiations before imposing any sanctions.

The legislation is similar to section 301 of the U.S. trade law, which Washington has used to threaten retaliation against Taiwan during trade disputes, officials said.

The law also reduces government levies of 0.15 per cent on importers and 0.0625 per cent on exporters to a common 0.05 per cent of the value of goods traded.

The legislation is similar to section 301 of the U.S. trade law, which Washington has used to

protect Taiwan's foreign trade.

Soap ration cutback squeezes Havana consumers

HAVANA (R) — Havana's hard-pressed residents, already making do with reduced supplies of sugar and eggs this month, are now being asked to accept a temporary sharp cutback in their soap ration.

A spokesman for Havana's Provisional Directorate of Retail Trade said Friday that existing supplies of "Jabón de Lava" — an unscented bar of soap used for washing clothes — would be distributed in the capital only for children of up to two years of age.

Previously the ration had been one bar each month per person, independent of age. Infants were now being given sole priority because their clothes and nappies needed frequent washing.

The spokesman also said that there were no supplies of scented bathing soap — "Jabón de Bano" — available this month.

Many Havana residents greeted the latest cutback with disbelief.

"What am I going to wash clothes with?" one housewife asked.

Detergent, also rationed, is equally in short supply.

The spokesman said shortages in imported chemicals and raw materials for manufacturing soap were behind the latest ration cutback. "As soon as the raw materials arrive, it will be restored," he said.

The measure was expected to further boost soap prices on the flourishing black market, on which Cubans increasingly rely. A black market bar of soap is now worth at least one sixth of the average monthly wage.

Reforms help Vietnam boost rice output, exports

HANOI (R) — Vietnam produced 21.5 million tonnes of rice last year, nearly 1.6 million more than in 1991, and exported more than 1.4 million tonnes despite floods that destroyed many crops, an official newspaper has said.

The Sunday Vietnam News said farmers had increased production by planting new high-yield rice, using more modern planting techniques and tapping more than one trillion dong (\$100 million) in loans from the government.

Those included 600 billion dong (\$60 million) in loans for farmers in Vietnam's southern Mekong delta, which produced nearly 11 million tonnes of rice in 1992.

Vietnam, which exported 1.1 million tonnes of rice in 1991, used to be a rice importer.

But government reforms in the mid-1980s that broke up old agricultural cooperatives and freed farmers to grow and sell their own produce turned Vietnam into the world's third biggest rice exporter by 1990.

Vietnam produced a total of 24 million tonnes of grain in 1992, including rice, an increase of two million tonnes over the previous year, the newspaper said.

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Hindu fundamentalists unveil drive against Rao government

NEW DELHI (Agency) — India's right-wing Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has announced a nationwide campaign to paralyse the government over its demand to hold early parliamentary elections.

BJP President Murli Manohar told a news conference that the campaign would begin with a rally "of more than a million people" in New Delhi on Feb. 25.

The BJP wants the government to lift a ban imposed last month on three Hindu militant groups, including the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (World Hindu Council), after it led a mob of zealots to raise a mosque in Ayodhya on Dec. 6.

In Bombay, where at least 500 people have been killed in 10 days of Hindu-Muslim riots, Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao said Friday that India was in danger of breaking apart if communal hatred was allowed to fester and spread.

"If this country forsakes secularism it will break. I am absolutely convinced of that," Mr. Rao told a news conference after touring areas of Bombay where hundreds of shops, homes and cars were set ablaze.

The 71-year-old prime minister said India had been disfigured in the eyes of the world by the rioting that erupted after the destruction of the 16th-century Babri Mosque.

Mr. Joshi said the BJP's de-

mands include early elections in the four state assemblies in northern India where the Hindu party's governments were dismissed following the mosque's destruction.

Equally important, he said, is permission "to build a temple to Lord Rama," the Hindu warrior god, "at the site where the mosque stood."

The government has said it is setting up a trust to build a mosque and a Hindu temple in Ayodhya. The BJP says it does not need the government's involvement in the proposed temple.

Mr. Joshi said the BJP would call for "direct action" against the government if its demands were not met before the rally.

"Direct action" was a term used by the Muslim League for a campaign before India was granted independence by Britain in 1947. Hordes of right-wing Muslims attacked the mainstream nationalist Congress Party's workers and government offices at that time, and hundreds of people were killed in the Hindu-Muslim riots that followed.

Mr. Joshi said the BJP would not allow Mr. Rao's government to sit easily until all its demands were fulfilled.

He told Reuters later that the BJP would obstruct parliament when it met for its budget session next month. "If the government

has the methodical persecution of Muslims the last two weeks points to the deepening power of Hindu fundamentalism, and the unscrupulous work of land sharks and political operators taking advantage of a maelstrom.

"The attacks on Muslims seem to have been meticulously planned," said Anand Patwardhan, a Hindu film maker who examined Hindu fundamentalism in an award-winning documentary.



CONGREGATION: Muslims arrive in trucks at Bangladesh's small industrial town of Longi for the Bawla Jatra (World Muslim Congregation), the second largest Muslim gathering after the Hajj.

Organisers say two million Muslims from across the world are expected to join the three-day event which began Saturday (AFP photo)

AIDS cases estimated at 2.5 million

GENEVA (AP) — The World Health Organisation (WHO) said Friday the number of reported AIDS cases worldwide rose to more than 600,000 by the end of 1992, but that the total was likely four times as high.

WHO said about 13 million people had become infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which leads to AIDS. It said there had been about one million new HIV infections in the past six months.

The U.N. health agency said that by the end of December, 611,589 cases of full-blown AIDS had occurred since records started in 1981, about 10,000 higher than in its last report in June.

It said the United States reported 242,146 cases, more than one-third of the world's total. The report, submitted to WHO in December, contains figures through September.

The centres for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. agency that monitors the disease, predicted Thursday that the number of AIDS cases in the United States would rise to more than half a million by 1995, with 385,000 deaths.

WHO reported big increases in the number of recorded cases in Africa. It said the Kenyan government had informed it of 31,185 cases in a report received in October — 22,046 cases more than the previous report in May 1990. Uganda reported 34,611 cases, up from 30,190 in its previous report at the end of last year. Tanzania had 34,605 cases, a rise of 7,209 since July 1991.

Mr. Yeltsin's comments appeared to foreshadow a formal defence pact under which Russia would extend its anti-missile defences to cover Ukraine. But the details of such an arrangement were not immediately clear.

In turn, President Kravchuk

said he would join the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and reiterated a promise to sign

START 1.

Mr. Kravchuk and Mr. Yeltsin

signed a joint communiqué pledging to "continue efforts to reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons."

The men also agreed on oil exports to Ukraine and said they

had moved closer to agreement on rescheduling shares of the

foreign debt.

The smiling leaders, who met several times since the Soviet

collapse a year ago, praised

Fri-

day's meeting. Mr. Yeltsin said he hoped it would "help make

1993 the year of stabilisation, primarily economic, both in Russia and Ukraine."

Ukraine's insistence on compensation or security guarantees in return for giving up its nuclear missiles has raised fears that tension between the former Soviet republics would undo arms control efforts.

The statements Friday were aimed at reassuring the world that, despite the differences, Ukraine wants to fulfil its promise to become nuclear-free.

"I am sure the Ukrainian parliament will be able, in view of

Russia's initiative guaranteeing our security, ... to confirm its previous decision concerning the nuclear-free status of our state," Mr. Kravchuk said.

The Ukrainian leader said he was ready to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, although he did not say when.

In Washington, President George Bush asked the Senate

Friday to ratify the new nuclear missile reduction treaty with Russia, saying it represents "the cornerstone" of a long-term arms control effort.

"The START II treaty is clearly in the interests of the United States and represents a watershed in our efforts to stabilise the

nuclear balance and further reduce strategic offensive arms," the president said in a letter to the Senate.

The treaty signed in Moscow

Jan. 3 would reduce the two arsenals of long-range nuclear weapons to about one third of current levels by the year 2003.

All land-based, multiple-warhead missiles would be outlawed under the agreement signed with Mr. Yeltsin.

Mr. Bush said that acceptance

of the reductions "serves as a

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